

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 9-13, 18 and 21-29 are all the claims presently pending in the present Application. Claims 21-24 have been withdrawn.

It is noted that the amendments are made only to overcome the Examiner's non-statutory objections, and to more particularly define the invention and not for distinguishing the invention over the prior art, for narrowing the scope of the claims, or for any reason related to a statutory requirement for patentability.

It is further noted that, notwithstanding any claim amendments made herein, Applicant's intent is to encompass equivalents of all claim elements, even if amended herein or later during prosecution.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's indication that claims 9-10 are allowed. However, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims are allowable.

Claims 1, 4, 11 and 25-29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 (e) as being allegedly anticipated by Song (U. S. Patent Pub. No. 2005/0030441). Claims 2-3, 5-6, 12-13 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Song.

Appellant respectfully submits that there are features of the claimed invention that are not taught or suggested by Song. However, in the interest of expediting prosecution, Applicant would point out that the present Application has a foreign priority date (i.e., June 2, 2000, the filing date of the priority document (JP 2000-166318)) which is prior to the U. S. filing date (May 23, 2001) of the Song.

Therefore, Song is not prior art against the present Application. A verified English language translation of the priority document is submitted herewith. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw these rejections.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-6, 9-13, 18 and 21-29, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the

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Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully submitted,



Phillip E. Miller, Esq.
Reg. No. 46,060

Date: 11/17/06
McGinn IP Law Group, PLLC
8321 Old Courthouse Rd., Suite 200
Vienna, Virginia 22182
(703) 761-4100
Customer No. 21254